

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OUAGAD 01921 151033Z

11
ACTION AID-59

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R 121520Z SEP 73
FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
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INFO USINT ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
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AMEMBASSY PARIS

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AFDROUGHT

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: SENGHOR-WILLIAMS CONVERSATION

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT SENGHOR OF SENEGAL AND DEPUTY AID ADMINISTRATOR WILLIAMS DISCUSSED DROUGHT SITUATION AND ASSISTANCE NEEDS. SENGHOR EXPRESSED DEEPEST THANKS FOR US EMERGENCY AID AND FOR US READINESS PARTICIPATE IN RECOVERY EFFORTS. HE ALSO DISCUSSED LEADING ISSUES OF RECENT NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE AND POINTED OUT DECLINE OF SOVIET POSITION IN AFRICA. END SUMMARY

2. SENGHOR REQUESTED WILLIAMS TO TRANSMIT HIS DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO PRESIDENT NIXON FOR PROMPT AID PROVIDED BY USA, WHICH HAS BEEN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN EMERGENCY EFFORTS. HE CONTRASTED THIS WITH FAILURE USSR AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 OUAGAD 01921 151033Z

EAST EUROPE PROVIDE EVEN A SINGLE GRAIN OF CEREAL FOR SENEGAL.

3. ON SAHEL DROUGHT, PRESIDENT SENGHOR SAID RECORDS GOING BACK 300 YEARS IN SENEGAL INDICATE MAJOR DROUGHT EVERY HUNDRED YEARS (1780'S, 1860'S, 1968-73), WITH LESSER DROUGHTS EVERY 30 TO 40 YEARS IN BETWEEN (CIRCA 1913, 1942). HOWEVER, CURRENT DROUGHT MORE SERIOUS BECAUSE OF PROGRESSIVE DESERTIZATION CAUSED BY DEFORESTATION AND OVER GRAZING. SUPPORTING BOTH EMERGENCY, MEDIUM-TERM, AND LONG-TERM MEASURES, HE POINTED OUT THAT SENEGAL BASIN STATES HAVE HAD COMMON ORGANIZATION SINCE JUST AFTER INDEPENDENCE WHICH HAS PROPOSED DAM CONSTRUCTION, BUT SOURCES OF FINANCING HAVE NOT BEEN SENSITIZED TO NEEDS. HE COMPLIMENTED MINISTERIAL MEETING OF PERMANENT INTERSTATE COMMITTEE ON DROUGHT (PIC) FOR HAVINO CUT PROJECT LIST DOWN TO ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF WHAT HAD BEEN PROPOSED BY EXPERTS, FOR HE FEELS IT ESSENTIAL THAT REQUESTS BE REALISTIC. SENGHOR ALSO STRESSED NEED FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON DESERTIZATION AND ON DROUGHT CYCLES, AND STATED HE SUPPORTED AND APPRECIATED INITIATIVE OF USG TO SPONSOR WORK ON THIS THEME.

4. WILLIAMS STATED US HAS PLAYED MAJOR ROLE IN RELIEF AND WOULD PROVIDE FURTHER ASSISTANCE FOR CONTINUING RECOVERY PROGRAM. HE SAID US WOULD JOIN IN URGENT STEPS TO MAXIMIZE 1974 AND 1975 HARVESTS, POINTING OUT THAT ONLY NINE MONTHS REMAINS BEFORE 1974 PLANTINGS. MENTIONED US READINESS BRING TO BEAR ITS BEST SCIENTIFIC TALENT, USING EXPERIENCE WITH ARID ZONES OF USA.

5. SENGHOR, WHO JUST CAME FROM NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE IN ALGIERS, SAID THAT AT CONFERENCE HE SOUGHT AVOID CONDEMNATION SPECIFIC TYPES OF ACTIONS (E.G. CONDEMN NUCLEAR TESTING IN GENERAL RATHER THAN CONDEMNING USA AND FRANCE WITHOUT CONDEMNING USSR). HOWEVER, HIS APPROACH WAS DEFEATED IN BOTH COMMITTEE AND PLENARY SESSIONS. ANOTHER LEADING TOPIC INVOLVED WHETHER BASIC WORLD DICHOTOMY WAS COMMUNIST/CAPITALIST OR DEVELOPED/UNDERDEVELOPED. CASTRO PUSHED FORMER, BUT LATTER INTERPRETATION, WHICH SENGHOR SUPPORTED, PREVAILED. SENGHOR COMMENTED THAT SOVIETS FAILED IN EXTENSIVE CORRIDOR LOBBYING, WHEREAS CHINESE CAME OUT MUCH BETTER BY AVOIDING SUCH TACTICS.

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PAGE 03 OUAGAD 01921 151033Z

6. IN GENERAL, HE SAID, SOVIET POSITION IN AFRICA IS ON DOWNGRADE, BOTH BECAUSE OF LACK OF AID AND BECAUSE OF INCIDENTS SUCH AS THAT WHICH CAUSED SENGHOR AND PRESIDENTS OF MAURITANIA AND CONGO TO CANCEL SCHEDULED VISITS TO MOSCOW. SOVIETS TOLD AFRICAN STATES THAT COULD NOT GUARANTEE THAT THEIR PRESIDENTS WOULD MEET BREZHNEV. SENGHOR SAID HE THEN TOLD USSR AMBASSADOR THAT WHEN HE MADE PRIVATE VISIT TO USA ON INVITATION FROM UNIVERSITY, PRESIDENT NIXON ASKED THAT HE

COME SEE HIM. WHEN HE HAD THUS SEEN US PRESIDENT DURING PRIVATE VISIT TO USA, HOW COULD SENGHOR AGREE TO MAKE OFFICIAL VISIT TO USSR WITHOUT SEEING BREZHNEV? IT INTOLERABLE FOR HIS COUNTRY TO BE THUS SLIGHTED JUST BECAUSE IT IS UNDERDEVELOPED.

7. CHINESE POSITION IN AFRICA, BY CONTRAST, IS IMPROVING BECAUSE CHINESE ARE ALWAYS POLITE, CARRY OUT EFFECTIVELY WHATEVER AID PROJECTS THEY TAKE ON, AND DO NOT INTERFERE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF AFRICAN STATES.

8. SENGHOR CONCLUDED BY AGAIN EXPRESSING HIS STRONG APPRECIATION FOR US AID.

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Message Attributes

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